

 NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHICNIAGARA FALLS
for FAMILIES

TRAVELER

ALL TRAVEL, ALL THE TIME | March 2011

A TASTE OF FRANCE

Alan Richman turns his
love of food into a pursuit
of true culture

BRITISH COLUMBIA

A father's gift,
a daughter's
discovery

GHOSTS OF HONG KONG

The past still lives in a city
that craves the future—
if you know where to look

YOUR OWN PRIVATE AFRICA

ATHENS
IN JUST
48 HOURS

URBAN
HIKING
THE NEXT
ADVENTURE

FOR THE
CURIOUS
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20 events
you'll love

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Rapa Nui (aka Easter Island) was one stop on an extraordinary trip.

EDITOR'S NOTE



BY KEITH BELLOW, EDITOR

Trip of a Lifetime

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN travel nirvana and mind-numbing jet lag lies the “Places of a Lifetime” trip I helped lead last October. Seventy-four passengers came with me on a 24-day National Geographic Expeditions jaunt based on *Traveler*’s two signature “Places of a Lifetime” issues, published in 1999 and 2009. This cultural world-wind included National Geographic explorer-in-residence Wade Davis; *Traveler* contributing editor Chris Rainier; and Donald Johanson, the paleoanthropologist who discovered “Lucy,” a skeletal landmark of early human development. I’m not big on Tuesday-one-place, Wednesday-another travel, but this was the most extraordinary Whitman’s Sampler of a trip imaginable (on some legs, travelers could choose between multiple destinations).

Starting from Society headquarters in D.C., the airborne caravan hit Peru’s Amazon near Iquitos; Easter Island; Rarotonga; Papua New Guinea; Angkor, Cambodia, or Da Nang and Hue, Vietnam; Xi’an, China (for the Terra Cotta Warriors); Beijing and the Great Wall; the Taj Mahal or Fatehpur Sikri in India; Tanzania’s Serengeti or Ngorongoro Crater; Petra or Wadi Rum in Jordan; Istanbul; and London.

Our cast of characters ranged from a recent graduate given the trip by her grandmother and a handful of retired CEOs to an “inner-peace expert” and a noted tech entrepreneur.

For me, the thrill was that, experienced traveler or not, all were intensely curious and willing to be surprised—the hallmarks of true



From Coast to Coast

PEOPLE CARE ABOUT their beaches. That sums up the response we got from our seventh annual Destinations Rated issue (November-December 2010), which focused on how well coastal destinations are faring. Canadians were elated to have four beaches make our “top-rated” category, with the *National Post* noting that Newfoundland’s Avalon Coast ranked highest thanks to its “outport villages, archaeological sites, friendly people, and significant tourism potential.” Others saw their ranking as a “strident wake-up call.” **Vu The Binh**, head of travel for Vietnam’s national tourism administration, said the low ranking of the Nha Trang and Mui Ne beaches “should make us cautious about unsuitable moves in coastal tourism development.” **Dana Beach** of the Coastal Conservation League told a reporter that the “in trouble” rating of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, shows the need to pursue sustainable development. “We have to prove them wrong,” he said. In Florida, many residents took offense when we said that Palm Beach County was part of the Treasure Coast. “Those of us who call the Treasure Coast home refer to points south as ‘the concrete highway,’ for its uncontrolled growth,” wrote **Sue Buckland** of Fort Pierce, which is north of Palm Beach. Geotourism editor **Jonathan Tourtellot** responds: “We used

Romanian shepherds.

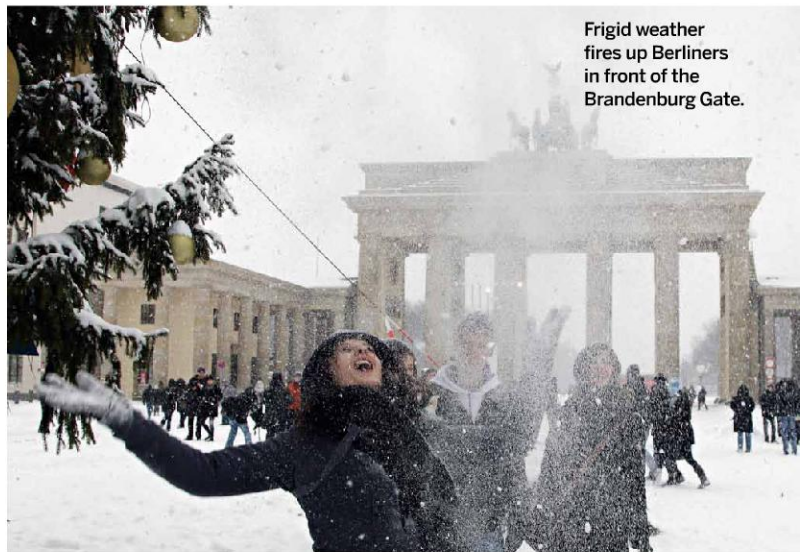
WARMING UP TO FROSTY CLIMES

Tackling a lifelong aversion to cold weather, our author bravely embraces the big chill.

I CHARGE ALONG THE KURFÜRSTENDAMM, dodging and weaving to avoid the winter shoppers strolling this tony avenue in Germany's capital of Berlin. Some stare disapprovingly at the impatient out-of-towner, but I cannot slow down—I need to get my blood moving. The circulation in my fingertips and toes has just screeched to a halt, and every time I breathe it feels like I'm inhaling a box of razor blades. I had heard that winters in Berlin can become downright chilly, but I had not expected this sort of Arctic cold.

I hate the cold, mainly because I've never been able to take it well. On those unexpected sunny days in spring when everyone strips to sandals and T-shirts to enjoy the (relative) warmth, I'm the party pooper cocooned in Polar fleece. Winter's diversions have never been adequate compensation for the discomforts of the season. I don't like snowball fights, ice-skating, or even hot chocolate. The very idea of skiing sends a shiver to my bones. In fact there is only one thing worse than being cold: being cold and wet.

I grew up in the northeastern part of the United States, so



Frigid weather fires up Berliners in front of the Brandenburg Gate.

“
Winter is like nature's annual trip to the dentist: something you get through because you'll feel so relieved when it's over.
”

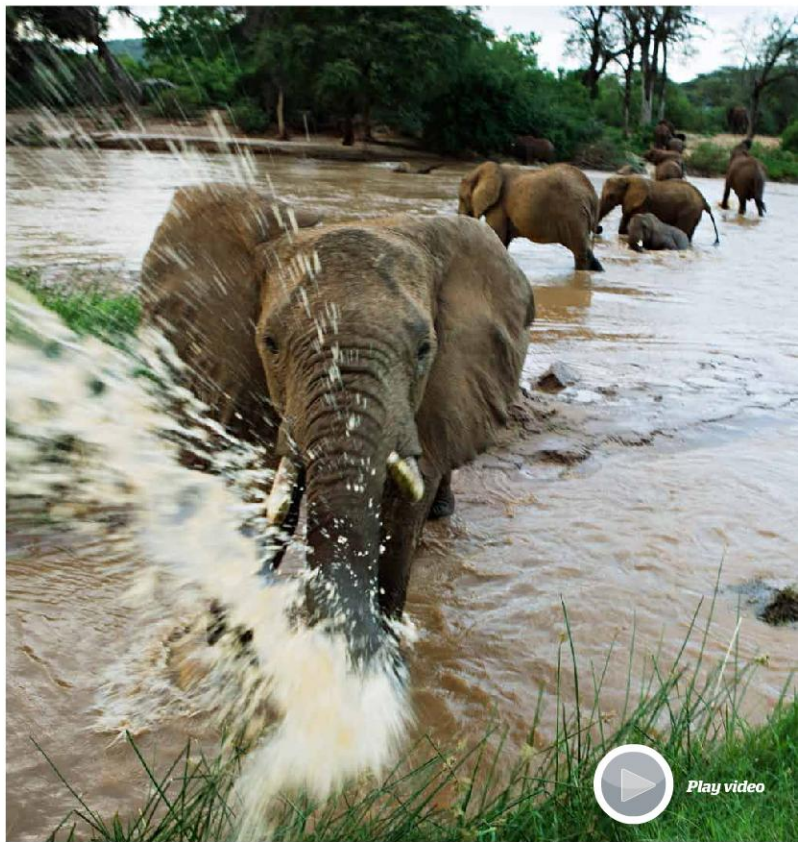
ELEPHANT TROUBLE

These giant, intelligent, charismatic creatures have one disastrous design flaw.

ANY CLEAR-THINKING PERSON would be yelling, “Hurry, faster, let’s get out of here.” Instead, I hear myself saying, “Stop! You’re ruining the shot.” Apparently the years have scrambled my prefrontal cortex synapses, limiting my ability to recognize the danger posed by an angry, charging, six-ton elephant fed up with my picture taking. Fortunately, Mike Hax, my guide and driver, sees the potential for an ugly Russell-Crowe-meets-the-paparazzi incident and keeps our vehicle in high-speed reverse.

We’re in East Africa, in Kenya’s Masai Mara for the annual wildlife migration. For photos, the best action takes place at the river crossings. Massive herds of wildebeest and zebra with the unwavering belief that the grass is always greener on the other side leap from riverbanks into crocodile-infested waters. These predator-prey encounters are centerfold material for *National Geographic* magazine—but can become humdrum when viewed relentlessly.

That’s why I prefer watching elephants. The biggest land animals on the planet spend up to three-fourths of their day



Play video

Elephant-watching is the highlight of any wildlife safari.

TRAVELING TROUBADOUR

Pop star Jason Mraz circles the world to perform—and gathers inspiration as he goes.

AERICAN singer-songwriter Jason Mraz—who has staged hundreds of concerts around the world—takes inspiration from his travels and from immersion in other cultures. That was never more true than last summer, when he undertook a rescue mission to Ghana, West Africa, with members of Free the Slaves. The international nonprofit group works to liberate children sold into slavery, sometimes by their own families. “I try not to write songs,” he told a reporter after the trip. “I would rather emote them, and I found myself going back to my room every night just pouring out new songs about what I was seeing.” The 33-year-old pop music sensation based in San Diego is into surfing, blogging, raw food, and a laid-back approach to travel.

Tell us about your trip to Ghana. It started with “Freedom Song,” written by musician Luc Reynaud in a shelter in Louisiana shortly after Katrina hit. I loved it, performed it, and passed it on to my friends at Free the Slaves. Later, they sent me photos of kids in Ghana dancing and singing



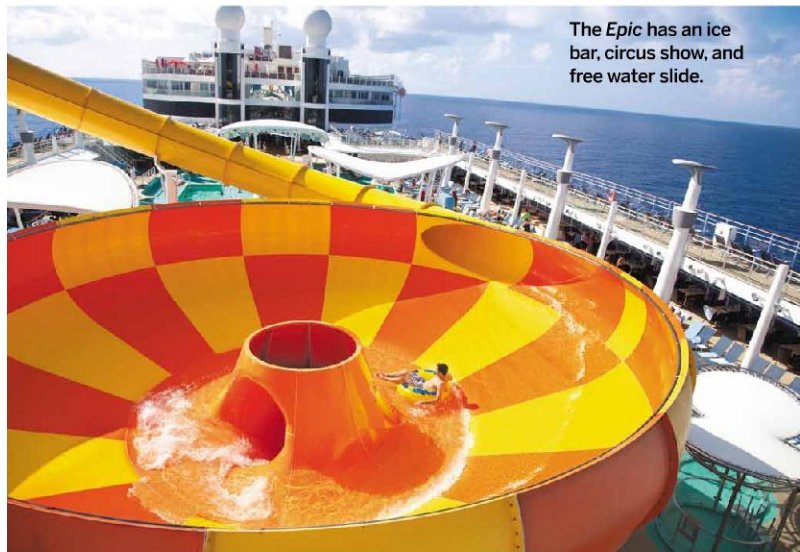
From Mechanicsville to Mumbai: Jason Mraz finds common humanity wherever he goes. Watch a video of him performing “Live High” from the DVD *Jason Mraz’s Beautiful Mess—Live on Earth*.

ALL-EXCLUSIVE CRUISES

Here come the megaships.
Better hold on to your wallet.

ON ROYAL CARIBBEAN'S brand-new, 5,400-passenger *Allure of the Seas*, you can belly up to the counter of the very first Starbucks at sea and order a grande mocha latte. There are nightly performances of a Cirque du Soleil-style show on Norwegian Cruise Line's (NCL) 4,100-passenger *Epic*. Disney's 4,000-passenger *Dream* will have its own 765-foot-long water coaster. ¶ But when Theresa Wells sailed on Royal Caribbean's *Oasis of the Seas* recently, she noticed something else about the monster ship that was over the top. "Everywhere we went, they wanted to sell us something," she says. "Whenever we walked to dinner, the photographers wanted to take pictures—10 to 15 at a time, like glamour shots." The pitches were bigger than on previous cruises she had taken. The only place she could escape the aggressive offers for jewelry, spa treatments, and drinks was—apart from her own cabin—the library.

A cruise used to be "all-inclusive"—meaning you could step on board, and just about everything except drinks and shore excursions would be taken care of. But as the ships have



The *Epic* has an ice bar, circus show, and free water slide.

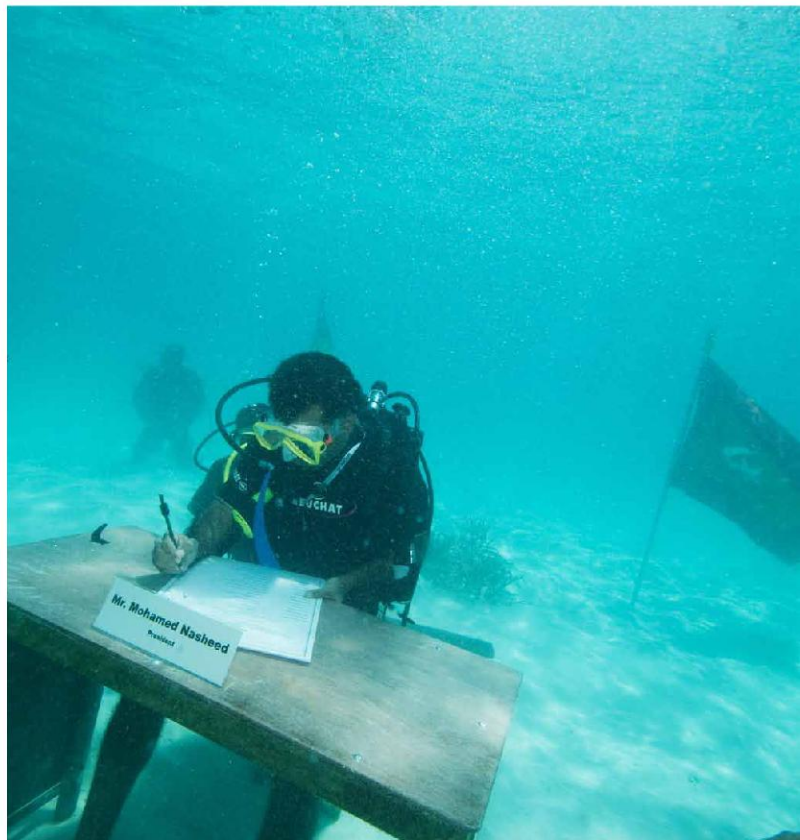
“
Cruise ships no longer make money by carrying passengers; they make money by marketing services to them.
”

AS THE WORLD SINKS

A message in a bottle from the Maldives.

THE MALDIVES are disappearing into the ocean. So says President Mohamed Nasheed, who in October 2009 strapped on scuba gear and held a cabinet meeting underwater with 13 government officials. They hoped to call global attention to climate change, which Nasheed considers a grave national security threat to this paradise of some 1,200 coral islands and atolls in the Indian Ocean. ¶ One year later, I flew halfway around the world to join President Nasheed, climate scientists, renewable energy experts, marine conservationists, and sustainable tourism advocates gathered on the eco-resort island of Soneva Fushi to help save the country and perhaps the rest of the planet. (The irony of riding a carbon-spewing plane to attend a conference on how to reduce carbon emissions isn't lost on me. More on that later.)

Educated in maritime studies, 43-year-old Nasheed is dashing, well-informed, and frequently compared to Barack Obama, who took office around the same time. Nasheed had boldly announced plans for the Maldives to become the world's first carbon-neutral country. He spoke to me in the



The president of the Maldives publicizes climate change.

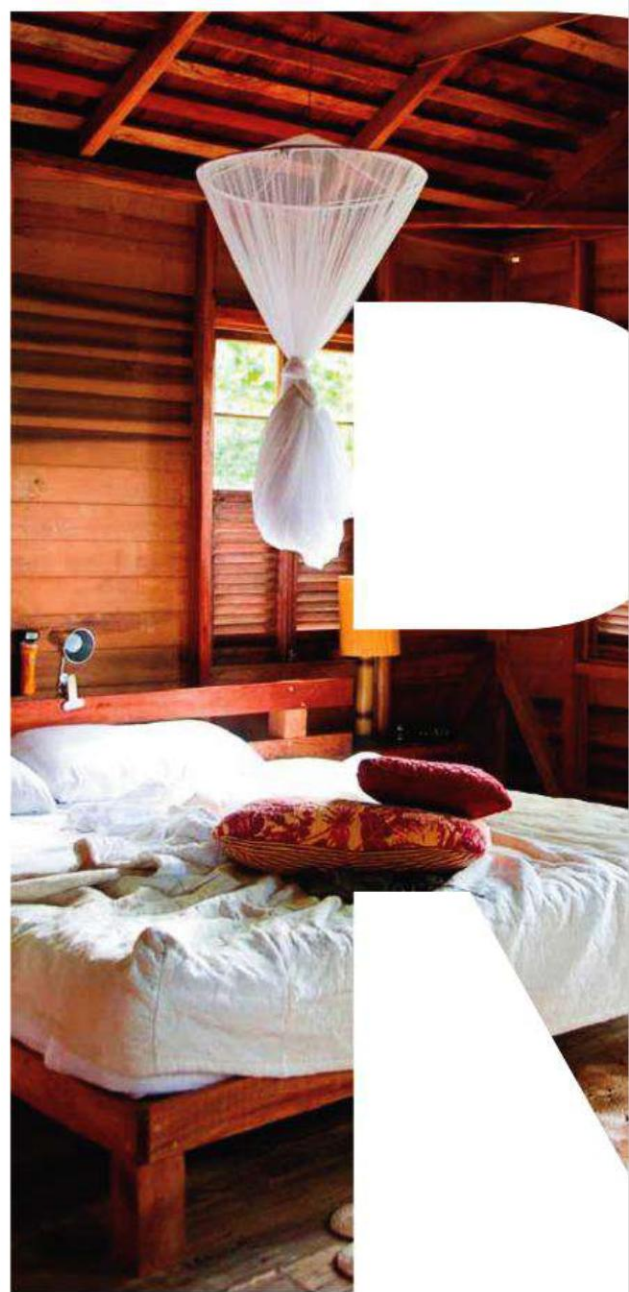


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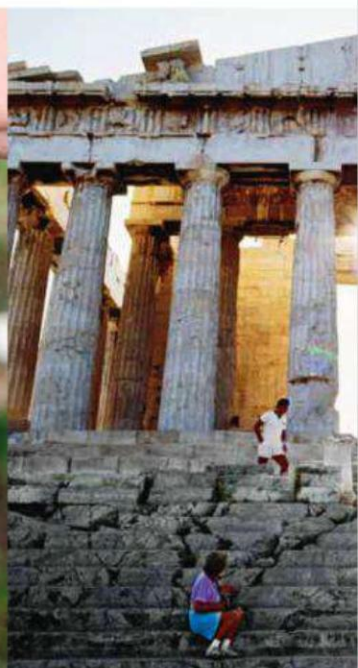




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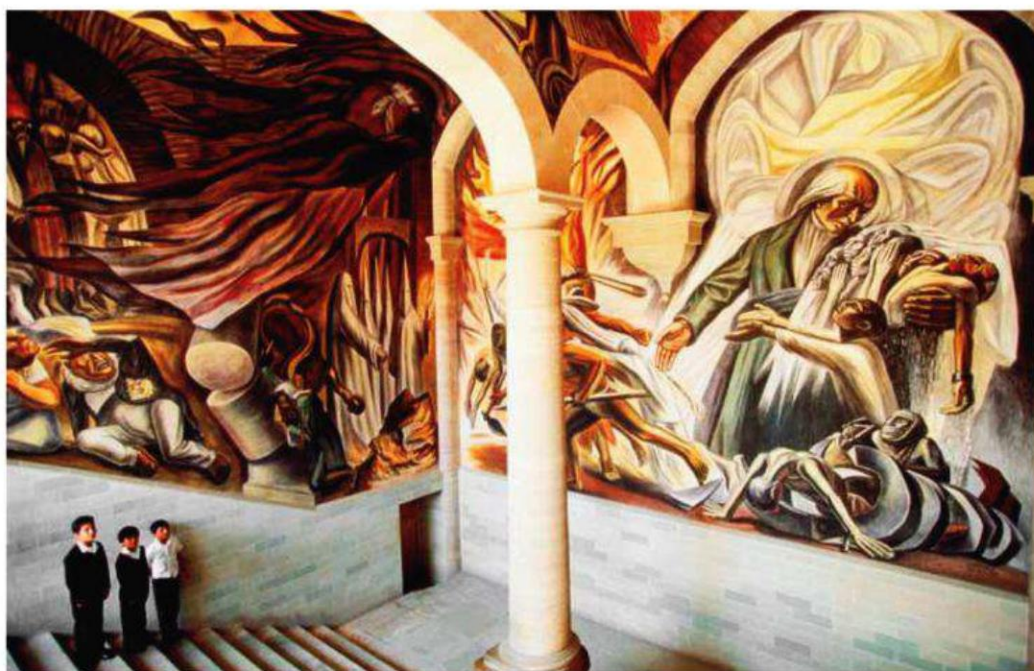
TRAVEL
AT ITS
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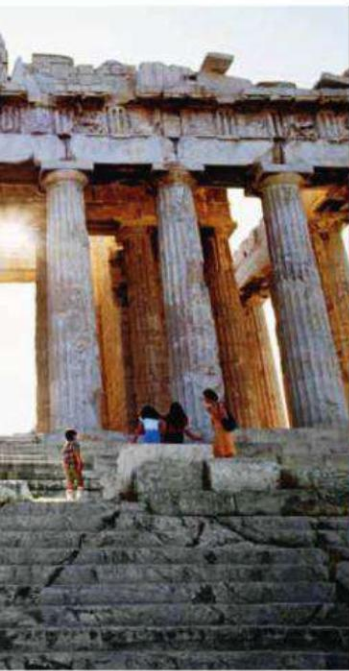




INSIDE SMART

Back to the Farm, in Style ■ Top Open
48 Hours: Athens ■ On Foot in Zurich ■
Doing Niagara Falls ■ Great Urban





RT TRAVELER

ra Houses ■ San Francisco Dim Sum

Go Now: Guanajuato ■ Dominica's Inns

an Hikes ■ Storied Grand Hotels



SMART TRAVELER

Return to the Land

Upscale farm vacations are the latest twist to the locavore movement. | **By MARGARET LOFTUS**

A NEW GENERATION of Americans that plants kitchen gardens, cooks with local produce, and cans fruit is also literally going back to the farm, at least while on vacation. So-called agritourism generated \$567 million in the U.S. in 2007 (the latest figures available), nearly triple its take in 2002. Opting to spend leisure time on a working farm is nothing new: Farm stays are common in Europe, and many states in the U.S. have long promoted them to help boost income for rural residents. But now some enterprising farmers have updated the concept with stylish digs and hands-on experiences, such as cheese-making, that appeal to urbanites with a yen for country living. Dutch company Feather Down Farm Days, for one, has teamed up with three small American farms to offer stays in shabby-chic, canvas-walled tents and plans several more in the next few years. The trend stems from a need to connect with our rural roots, says agritourism champion Bill Bryan, co-owner of travel company Off-the-Beaten Path. “The more urban we get, the more disconnected we can be, to the point where kids don’t know milk comes from cows.” Here are five places where they can learn that. Dig up more at state tourism websites or registries, such as farmstayus.com or ruralbounty.com.

STONY CREEK FARM, WALTON, NEW YORK

Visit this farm in the rolling hills of New York’s Catskill Mountains and

Guests roast hot dogs over a campfire at Stony Creek Farm in New York.



Text

Hot Magazines



Tent with a view at
MaryJane's Farm.





Clockwise from
left: Garden at Rincón
Farm in
discovery
read s
Jane's



wise from lower
quests pet goats
conada Dairy
n California, and
er produce and
stories at Mary-
Farm in Idaho.

TOP 5

Grand Stages of Bel Canto

These world-class opera houses strike high notes of song and culture. | **By JEANNETTE KIMMEL**

A GRAND OPERA can be made grander by its setting. The world's great opera houses—Milan's La Scala, London's Royal Opera House, the Sydney Opera House among them—have become destinations unto themselves. Here are five that get a standing ovation, whether or not Plácido Domingo or Cecilia Bartoli are singing.

1 TEATRO COLÓN, BUENOS AIRES > It boasts some of the best acoustics in the world, thanks not only to its horseshoe shape but also to the seat upholstery. Modern fabrics dulled sound, so renovated seats were stuffed with horsehair, just as when the theater was built in 1908.

2 DROTTHNINGHOLMS SLOTTSTEATER, STOCKHOLM > This 18th-century theater and UNESCO World Heritage site presents operas as they were originally performed in the 1700s, using original stage machinery and period instruments.

3 HANOI OPERA HOUSE, HANOI > French colonists modeled the opera house, built in 1911, after Paris's renowned Palais Garnier. Watch a *chèo* opera, a traditional Vietnamese satire that combines folk songs and pantomime.



Musical theater:
Hanoi's art nouveau-
style opera house.

48 HOURS

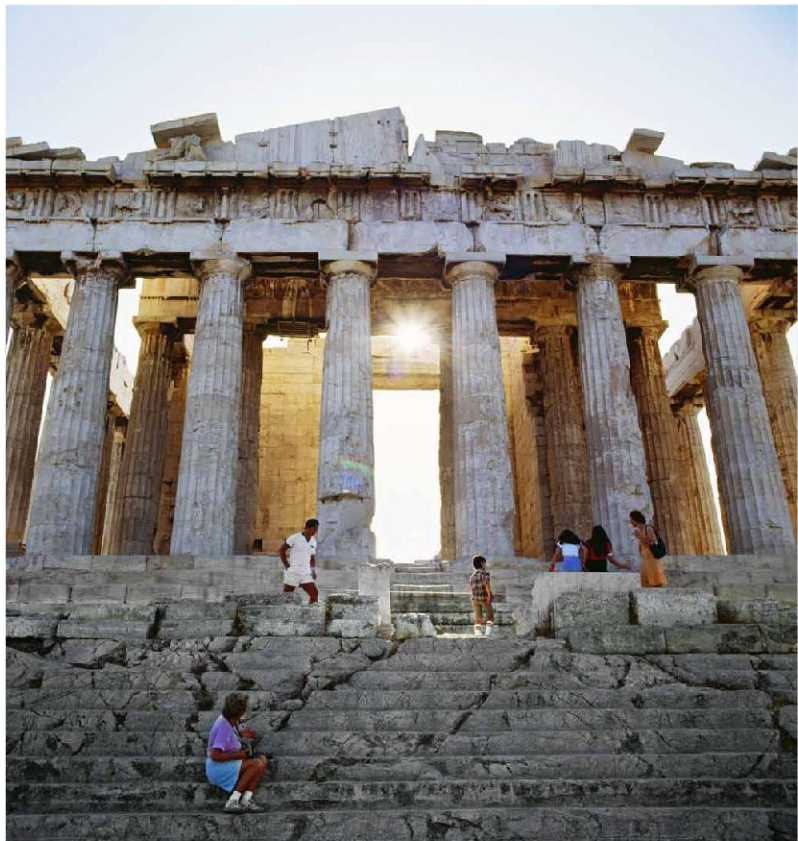
Timeless Athens

Current economic woes seem a hiccup in the Greek capital's ancient history. | **By JANE FOSTER**

SOMETHREE million visitors are expected to flock to Athens this year—despite its economic troubles. Last May, Greece accepted a \$147-billion bailout to avoid bankruptcy. The austerity measures that followed don't really affect travelers, who will still find a sometimes chaotic modern city with an unlikely mix of ancient Greece's greatest treasures, Byzantine churches, and concrete apartment blocks—as well as a now blossoming contemporary art scene.

WHAT TO DO A pedestrian-only promenade connects the **Acropolis**, a craggy hill crowned by three ancient temples, to Athens's other top archaeological attractions—the **Agora** (marketplace), the **Kerameikos** (cemetery), the **Theater of Dionysus**, and the **Temple of Olympian Zeus**—making it possible to explore the area around the Acropolis entirely on foot, just as the ancients would have done.

Nearby, the light-filled **New Acropolis Museum**, opened in 2009, displays statues and stone carvings from the Acropolis site. On the top floor lies a full-size recreation of the marble frieze that once ran around the top of the fifth-century B.C. **Parthenon**, the Acropolis's largest and most venerated temple. Plaster copies stand in for the missing pieces, the so-called Elgin Marbles, that reside in London's British Museum despite decades of wrangling by Greek authorities to have them returned.



The Parthenon honors the goddess Athena, for whom the Greek capital is named.

ON FOOT

A New Kind of Swiss Colony

If you thought Zurich was all about brooding bankers, you haven't visited Zurich West. | *By* EVERETT POTTER

IN THE FORMER industrial quarter just west of Zurich's city center, cutting-edge artists and architects have reimagined and repurposed moribund industrial buildings, infusing the area between the Limmat River and the railroad tracks with a Berlin-like energy. This neighborhood walk offers something for foodies, art lovers, and the style-conscious.

1) Löwenbräu Areal This converted brewery houses a branch of the venerable Kunsthalle Zurich and a handful of avant-garde galleries like Hauser & Wirth. Although much of the complex is closed for renovations until early 2012, it's still worth sauntering by the Victorian-era redbrick building to glimpse the area's gritty roots.

2) Markthalle Zurich's first indoor food hall overflows with Swiss-made cheeses (creamy Vacherin Mont D'Or, nutty Tête de Moine), wines such as a Riesling-Silvaner from Zurich winery Zweifel; and jewel-like chocolates from Sprüngli.

3) Viadukt Stroll along this row of shops and restaurants recently opened under the stone arches of the railroad viaduct. Amalgam stocks Swiss ski and street fashion, while Perlavia has stylish clothing and gear for hiking, camping, and kayaking. Restaurant Viadukt offers a

Freitag reuses tarps, inner tubes, and seat belts for its hip eco-conscious bags.



[View map](#)

GO NOW

Guapo Guanajuato

Near San Miguel de Allende, this handsome town is a Mexican find. | **By MELINDA MAHAFFEY**

DESPITE GUANAJUATO'S proximity to tourist magnet San Miguel de Allende, this former capital of Mexico (for one month in 1858) and UNESCO World Heritage site remains little known to travelers. Its appeal comes as no surprise to locals, who often refer to it as the nation's cultural capital, in large part due to October's International Cervantes Festival. Its outdoor cafés and sun-drenched plazas invite relaxation while its twisting alleyways lined with pastel-colored houses call for exploration.

MEET THE MURALISTS For a crash course in Guanajuato history, check out the two stairway murals by native son José Chávez Morado at the **Alhóndiga de Granaditas** fortress, site of a major Mexican Independence battle in 1810. At the **Museo Casa de Diego Rivera**—the artist's birthplace in 1886—head to the second floor to view Rivera's rarely seen early works, such as his experimentations with Impressionism and Cubism.

GO ALFRESCO Sip a margarita at a patio table at **Casa Valadez**, at the southeast corner of the **Jardín de la Unión**. Its prime location provides a front-row view of the mariachi bands, shoeshiners, carpet sellers, and buskers who populate the park. Across the street at the Templo San Diego, *estudiantinas* (strolling musicians in costumes)



Tunnels snake through bright-hued Guanajuato.





At the Alhóndiga de Granaditas, murals by José Chávez Morado recall the city's history.

HOTEL CENTRAL

America's Enduring Resorts

Striking in size, these centuries-old historic hotels continue to evolve with time. | **By MARGARET LOFTUS**

BUILT AT THE DAWN of tourism in the U.S., the great resorts of the 18th and 19th centuries hosted Presidents, royals, and a burgeoning middle class. Even after ambitious restorations, these grand hotels remain true to their roots and places in American history.

President James Buchanan spent so much time at the **Omni Bedford Springs Resort** in Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains (from \$209) that it became known as the Summer White House while he was in office. Like other guests, Old Buck came for the rejuvenating mineral springs. Today, the antebellum resort has restored one of the oldest golf courses in the country and boasts a new wing with 96 rooms.

Fresh from a grand tour of Europe and flush with a fortune made in gold and copper mining, Spencer Penrose remade a casino outside Colorado Springs to rival the finest continental hotels. The lavish opening party for the **Broadmoor** (from \$300) in 1920 drew top hoteliers and lasted for a week. This Italianate resort on Cheyenne Lake continues to attract A-listers and has more than doubled its original guest room count to 744. Last May, the hotel debuted six private Cape Cod-style cottages, with up to eight bedrooms and stone fireplaces in each.

The patch of southern Indiana known as French Lick has long attracted visitors with its mineral springs. In 1901, a direct rail line from Chicago started bringing the social and political elite,



Back to bygone days: Grand Hotel guests ride to town in horse-drawn carriages.





Grand Hotel 1898

MACKINAC ISLAND, MICHIGAN

The Grand Hotel on Michigan's Mackinac Island, circa 1898, the year that cars were banned on this rocky forested island in the straits between the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. Bicycles and horse-drawn carriages are still the only mode of transportation, preserving the resort's Victorian feel.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE
GRAND HOTEL







Grand Hotel 1947

MACKINAC ISLAND,
MICHIGAN

Esther Williams and Jimmy Durante, who filmed the 1947 musical *This Time for Keeps* at the Grand Hotel, with W. Stewart Woodfill (*left*), the hotel's owner from 1932 until he sold it in 1979 to his nephew and current owner R. D. Musser. The Grand's 500,000-gallon swimming pool, built for the movie, is named in Williams' honor.

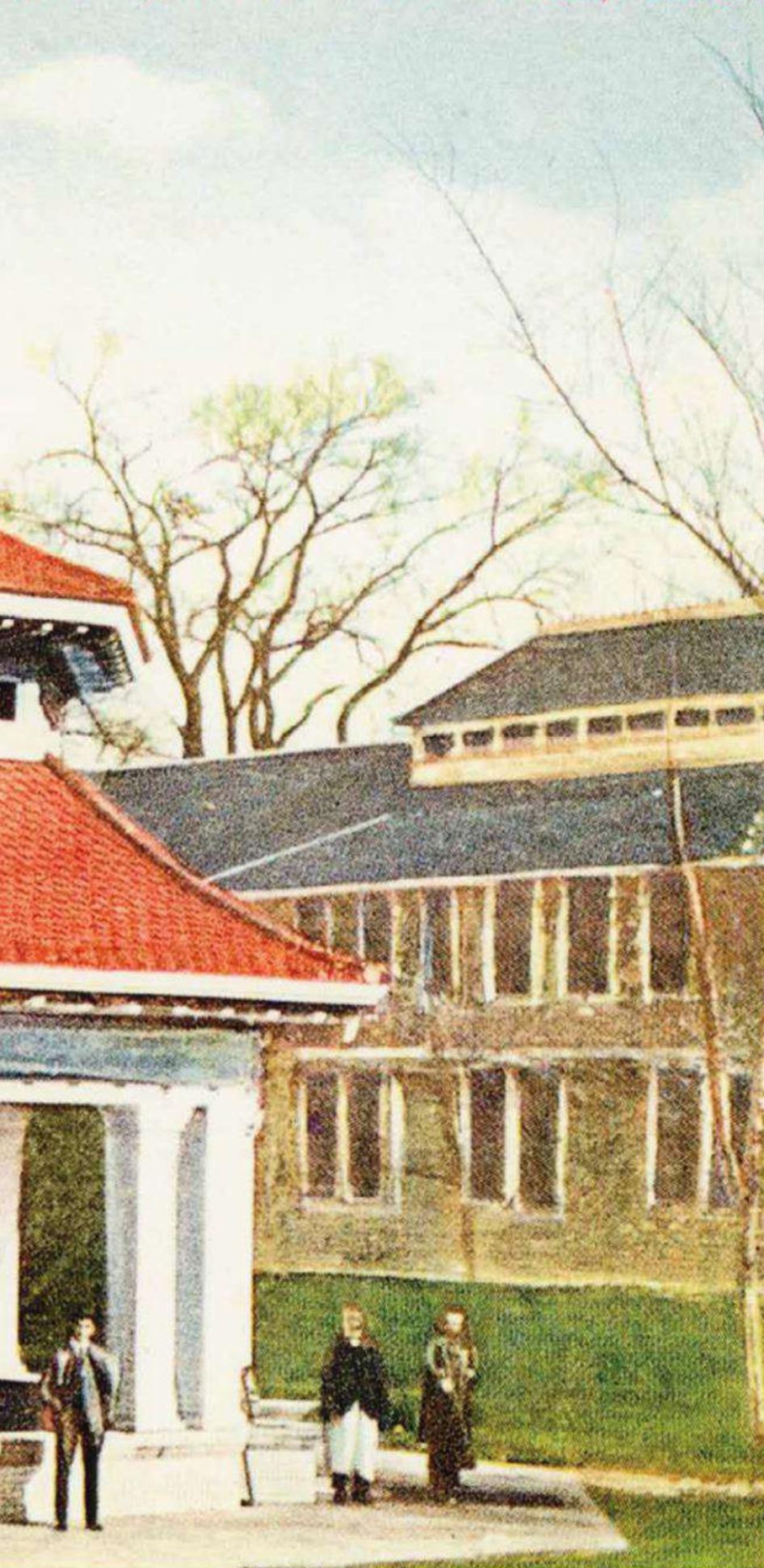
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE
GRAND HOTEL



Pluto S



Springs, French Lick, Ind.



French Lick 1910

FRENCH LICK, INDIANA

Health nuts have flocked to the Pluto Spring in French Lick, Indiana, since the 19th century to drink its sulfur-rich water, touted for its powers as a laxative. ("When nature won't, Pluto will" went the slogan). Visitors no longer swig from the spring since it contains trace elements of lithium, which was designated a controlled substance in the 1970s, but soaking in the stuff is still said to have healing properties.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FRENCH
LICK RESORT







Broadmoor 1923

COLORADO SPRINGS,
COLORADO

Broadmoor stables hosted the western headquarters of the Remount Service, a government program launched in 1908 to procure and breed riding horses for the Army. Each fall at the hotel, the service sponsored a five-day endurance ride in which the horses carried 200 pounds of weight and covered 60 miles a day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF
BROADMOOR ARCHIVES







Greenbrier Bunker 1959

**WHITE SULPHUR
SPRINGS,
WEST VIRGINIA**

The U.S. government built a top secret underground bunker, shown here under construction in 1959, into a mountainside under the Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va. to house Congress in case of a nuclear attack. The fall-out shelter was decommissioned in 1995 and is now open for tours and Cold War-themed parties.

PHOTO BY U. S. GOVERNMENT/
AP IMAGES



CHECKING IN

The Nature Island

The Caribbean island of Dominica favors small inns over chain hotels. | *By* **SHARON McDONNEL**

COCOA COTTAGES > TRAFALGAR

Surrounded by cacao and mango trees, 800 feet above the Eden-like Roseau Valley, the Cocoa Cottages feature five rustic guest rooms with views of the rain forest. Colorful all-wood interiors include landscape paintings by local artists Earl Etienne and Ellingworth Moses, mosaic-tiled bathrooms, and private porches. Guests sip cocoa tea and rum flavored with spices grown on the property and dine on local fish, house-made chocolates, and organic fruits and vegetables. A grand piano and guitar entice music lovers. Extreme Dominica, an on-site outfitter, offers excursions to Titou Gorge. From \$125.

BEAU RIVE > CASTLE BRUCE

This refined sanctuary overlooking the rocky Atlantic coast reflects the sophisticated taste of owner Mark Steele, who designed the plantation-style main house and planted the garden with bougainvillea, ginger lilies, and anthuriums. Accommodations include six guest rooms in the main house, two garden cottages, and two rooms in the poolside cottage. All rooms feature African and Haitian artwork. Visit the nearby Carib Reserve to pick up crafts or make the short, steep trek to Richmond River for a dip in a natural pool. Children under 16 are not permitted. From \$180.



Jungle Bay's rustic rooms offer views of the rain forest.

TASTE OF TRAVEL

Into the Heart of Dim Sum

In San Francisco, tasty dim sum dishes are best shared family-style with a cup of hot tea. | **By EVE TAI**

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS founded the country's first Chinatown in San Francisco and also brought to our shores the tradition of drinking tea with dim sum—literally, “a speck of heart”—small servings of snacks.

“The dim sum experience in San Francisco is special because of the city’s place in the Chinese diaspora,” says Bonnie Tsui, author of *American Chinatown: A People’s History of Five Neighborhoods*. “Because the Chinese have been there so long [since the 1848 Gold Rush], Chinese food culture is now part of the mainstream.”

Today San Francisco’s Chinatown teems with tourist kitsch but remains a real working-class neighborhood, full of dim sum restaurants crowded with locals. San Francisco has also spawned a second Chinatown about five miles west in the city’s Richmond District where dim sum parlors sit cheek by jowl with Russian delis and Mexican taquerias.

Servers at **City View** (662 Commercial St.) located on the edge of Chinatown in the Financial District, serenely wheel dim sum carts around an airy dining room hung with Chinese landscape paintings. The honey-glazed shrimp and walnuts, baked barbecue pork triangles, and lettuce wraps are solid crowd-pleasers. Both City View and Chinatown spot **Great Eastern Restaurant** (649 Jackson St.) produce toothsome and reliable selections—*dan tat* (egg custard tarts),

Perfect parcels
from May Flower.





Bustling May Flower restaurant serves seafood dim sum.



Classic Dim Sum Bites

You can experiment with dozens, if not hundreds, of dim sum dishes. “Go with a large group of people and order everything,” suggests Bonnie Tsui, author of *American Chinatown: A People’s History of Five Neighborhoods*. “That way you get to try all kinds of flavors and textures.” Dim Sum, like these classic dishes, is served daily during brunch hours—typically between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE
MAY FLOWER RESTAURANT,
RICHMOND DISTRICT, BY
CATHERINE KARNOW.



Scallop and shrimp dumpling with crab roe, served in a steamer basket.



Steamed dumplings with shrimp and pea sprouts.



Seaweed salad and mini octopus, topped with toasted sesame seeds.



Deep-fried sesame dough balls.



A trio of miniature egg custard tarts.



Salt and pepper black cod, breaded and deep-fried.

FAMILY

Plunging Into Niagara Falls

The Canadian side offers the best views. Here's a guide to doing it right. | **By SUSAN O'KEEFE**

THE LEGENDARY WATERS tumble between the twin cities of Niagara Falls, New York, and Niagara Falls, Ontario, but the Canadian side offers superior views and more numerous attractions.

GO IN THE SPRING ▶ “There are fewer crowds and better hotel deals,” says Holly Goertzen of the Niagara Parks Commission. “Plus the daffodils are in full bloom and the orchards along the Niagara Parkway are ablaze with color.” Summer brings the hordes and more pleasant temperatures (an average of 77°F) and free events such as weekend fireworks shows over the falls.

LOGISTICS ▶ Make your first stop the Table Rock Centre next to the falls to purchase an Adventure Pass that combines discounted admission to the area's top attractions, including the boat ride to the falls (*Maid of the Mist*), a tour behind the falls, a multimedia theater experience, and a boardwalk stroll along the white-water edge of the falls. The pass also includes transportation for two days on the bus that loops around the sights. Got children under five? They get in free to all attractions.

INTO THE MIST ▶ Since 1846 the *Maid of the Mist* has brought travelers face-to-face with the thundering natural wonder. For the 30-minute



Upper: The *Maid of the Mist* under a rainbow. Lower: Raincoated kids aboard the *Maid of the Mist* get wet.

AUTHENTIC GOODS

The Magic of Marbled Paper

Italy's papermaking tradition is a journey along the Silk Road. | **By SHARON McDONNELL**

HISTORY The artful paper products in Florence, Italy, are of two kinds: handmade marbled paper (*carta marmorizzata*), produced according to a centuries-old art that began in China and flourished in Turkey, and “Florentine paper,” machine-made paper sold at bookstores. In the 16th century, merchants and travelers brought *ebru* (cloud) marbled paper from Turkey to Italy and other Western European countries, which began to make “Turkish paper” of their own.

Today, Florence is one of a handful of places in Europe where marbled paper is still produced. Italy's Amalfi Coast has its own papermaking tradition dating from the 18th century, when 16 paper mills operated in Amalfi's Valle dei Mulini, or valley of the mills. The **Paper Mill Museum** (www.museodellacarta.it) in the town of Amalfi covers the discovery of paper in ancient China, its spread along the Silk Road to the Arab world, and its manufacture in the former maritime republic. Thick plain paper—watermarked with the shield of Amalfi or its noble families—was used for legal and religious documents.

WHERE TO PURCHASE Artisans at the oldest marbled papermaker in Florence, **Giulio Giannini e Figlio**, founded in 1856 and located

Il Papiro's oval box is hand-marbled with a blue peacock pattern.



ADVENTURE

Into the Wild, Pronto

No need to go very far. These five great hikes are all within a city's reach. | **By GEORGE W. STONE**

NOT MANY PEOPLE compare Prospect Park, Brooklyn, to a safari stop. But Afro-pop singer Angélique Kidjo does. “I feel like I’m in the bush, in the jungles in Africa,” the Benin-born musician told the *New York Times* of the park near her home. Here are five other escapes that will transport you.

SEATTLE: SEWARD PARK Emerald City ambler abandon their cappuccino cafés to explore this lush 300-acre forest on a scenic peninsula jutting into Lake Washington. Day hikers take to winding old-growth forest trails; mountain bikers and runners loop a 2.4-mile perimeter path. 15 minutes from downtown.

WASHINGTON, DC: C&O CANAL One of the coolest scrambles near the nation’s capital is this rocky trail that runs between the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath and the Potomac River. Section A of the **Billy Goat Trail** (1.7 miles) offers the best views of the roiling white-water rapids of Great Falls. The steep hard-rock faces of the Spitzbergen Cliffs present a daunting, but doable climbing challenge. 25 minutes from Washington, D.C.

PHOENIX: CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN The dromedary-like hump that dominates the urban topography of Phoenix makes for a rugged So-



Green scene: The ferny forests of Seward Park are just a short drive from downtown Seattle.

Text

Hot Magazines

EXPERIENCE

Sweet Homecoming

A visit to a sugar shack in the maple forests of Quebec brings back childhood memories. | **By JODI HELMER**

WHEN I WAS EIGHT, sinking my teeth into a piece of freshly made maple taffy was even better than chomping the ears off of chocolate bunnies at Easter or scarfing multiple candy bars on Halloween.

Once a year, I boarded the bus with classmates or hopped in the car with my parents and traveled from the suburbs of Toronto into the dense woods of Ontario and Quebec where maple syrup was made. The best taffy was handmade at sugar shacks—family-run syrup operations, some of which have reception halls offering tours and home-style meals featuring pancakes doused in maple syrup.

I braved low temperatures and endured tree-tapping and sap-boiling demos just so I could watch the real magic happen: the moment when an expert hand poured the warm syrup over a plank of packed snow and with a few flicks of the wrist made a sublime confection on a Popsicle stick. One bite of the sticky, sweet treat, and frozen fingers and toes were forgotten.

Now, 30 years later, I travel from my adopted home in North Carolina to the Sucrerie de la Montagne in Rigaud, a village 43 miles outside of Montreal. I want to find out if my childhood memories stand up to my adult sensibilities.

The long-forgotten but familiar scent of burning logs and frying sausages hits me when I enter the *cabane à sucre*, as sugar shacks are

Fresh maple taffy on a bed of snow.



Hello, sugar: Lunch is served family-style at the Sucrierie de la Montagne.





A

This
wins
fr

Platters of savory
seafood inspire
smiles at Le
Central, a classic
Norman bras-
serie in seaside
Trouville-sur-Mer.

Normandy Invasion

s northern region of France handily
s over a skeptic with its rich cheeses,
fizzy ciders—and warm friendliness.



By **Alan Richman**
Photographs by **Catherine Karnow**



Decades ago,

back when I worried nobody in Paris liked me (I was an American—and a food critic), the wife of a French Michelin three-star chef tried to help. “Please tell people in America that Parisians are not unpleasant only to them. They are unpleasant to everyone.” The thought was comforting. Also disturbing. Like more than a few Americans, I am wary of the French, believing that no matter what we do for them—drink their wines, praise their sauces—they don’t like us one bit. ¶ So I was intrigued when a French chef working in California, Bruno Herve-Commereuc, told me, “To meet the best people in the world, go to Normandy.” He’s biased; he’s from there. Still....



Old ways hold fast around Pont-l'Évêque, here at cheesemaker Jérôme Spruytte's farm in the town of St.-Philbert-des-Champs. Rosy apples (right) bejewel an orchard at the centuries-old Domaine Familial Louis Dupont.



Text

Hot Magazines



Suggestions Card

Entrée d'honneur 24
Brochet de Langoustines 25

Paré de Bar avec Cèpe 55

Entrée de Cèpe au Curry Sa.

(nouveauté - 100% bio)



All pennants and polished pinewood, cozy Le Chasse Marée restaurant (*left*), in the coastal town of Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue, often sees owner Gilbert Lucas (in blue shirt) advising patrons on the *spécialités du jour*. Big on the restaurant's menu: fresh local oysters (*above*), a celebrated Norman delicacy.

[View map](#)



Pleasure boats enjoy a day off in the mast-filled harbor of Honfleur.

INTERNATIONAL MAPPING

◀ NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER





Alain

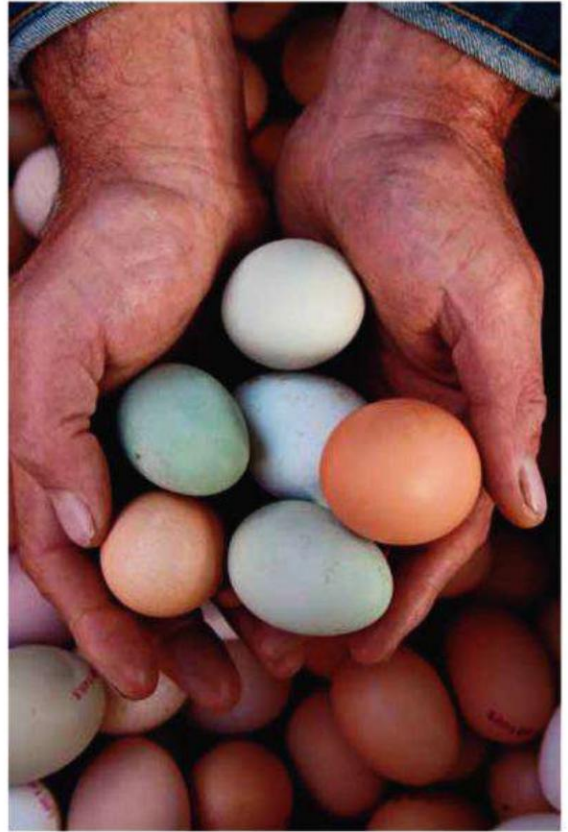
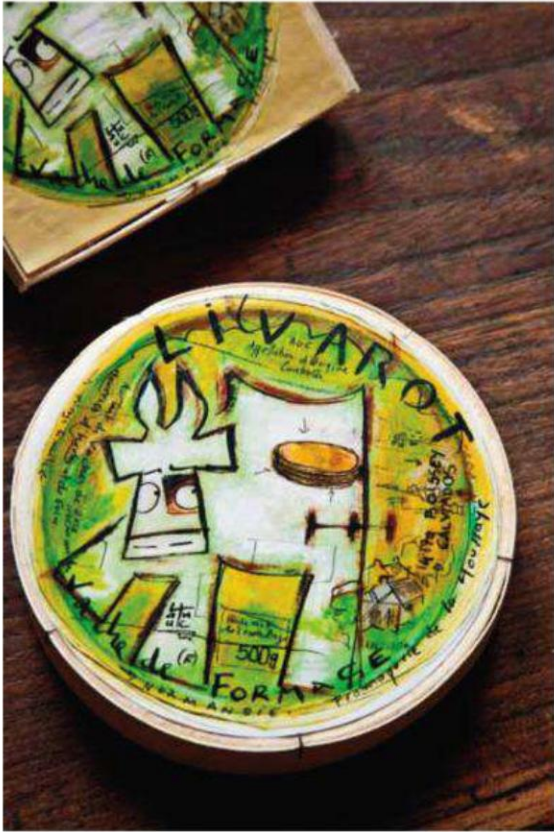
SPECIALITES
PLATEAUX DE FRUITS DE MER
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The ocean's
bounty rests
on ice at the
seafood vendor
Chez Alain in
Trouville-sur-Mer.



Poissons de
Petits Bateaux








Clockwise from far left, top: Cubist cows adorn rounds of Livarot cheese. A market vendor proffers an assortment of farm-fresh eggs. Calvados alchemist Jérôme Dupont shows off Domaine Dupont's seasoned oak barrels. A trio of Calvados brandies awaits tasters at 18th-century Château Les Bruyères. Raspberries pair with pistachio-cream chiffon in a "Montebello" tart at the Pâtisserie Charlotte Corday.





Fanciful beach villas earned Trouville-sur-Mer the sobriquet “Queen of Beaches” during its heyday in the 1800s, attracting notables like writer Marcel Proust and actress Sarah Bernhardt.



A man with dark, wavy hair and a beard, wearing a bright red zip-up sweater and a white scarf with a colorful floral pattern, stands in a grassy yard. He is holding a glass of white wine in his right hand and a small piece of cheese in his left. In the background, there is a rustic building with a mix of brick and wood siding, a grey shingled roof, and a red brick chimney. A black dog is lying on the grass near a table in the foreground. The table is covered with a white cloth and has various items on it, including a wooden cheese board with bread, a bottle of wine, and some cheese. The scene is set outdoors during the day.

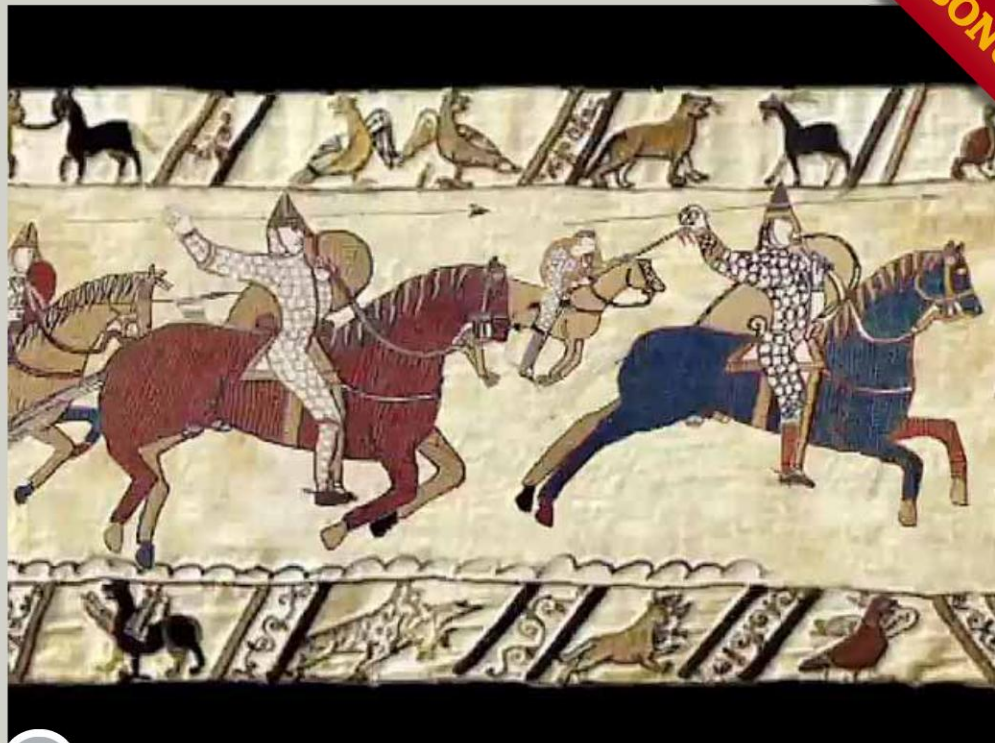
Cheesy does it at Fromagerie de la Houssaye, a cheese producer outside the town of Camembert, where friends join cheese maker Serge Lechevalier (sipping wine) to taste some of his *fromages*.



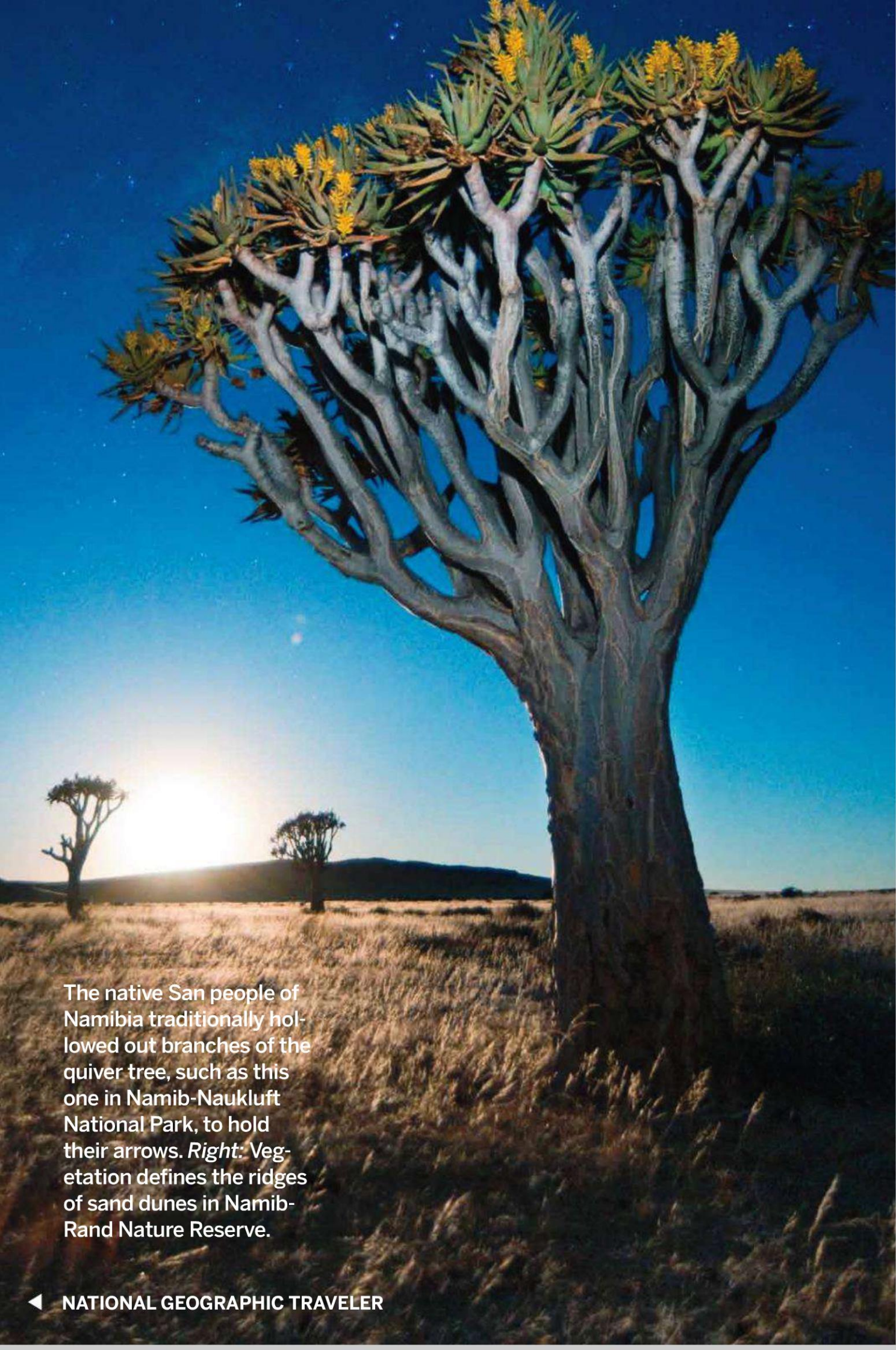
The Bayeux Tapestry Comes to Life

A medieval masterpiece inscribed as a Memory of the World by UNESCO, the 231-foot-long (and only 20-inch-wide) embroidery known as the Bayeux Tapestry was created soon after Normandy's victory in the Battle of Hastings, fought on October 14, 1066—and sealing Normandy's conquest of England. This playfully animated scrolling of the embroidered work depicts the many preparations for the battle (gathering armaments, building ships), the battle itself, and such ancillary scenes as the appearance of Halley's Comet and soldiers cooking and dining.

FILM BY DAVID NEWTON/POTION PICTURES LTD.



Play video



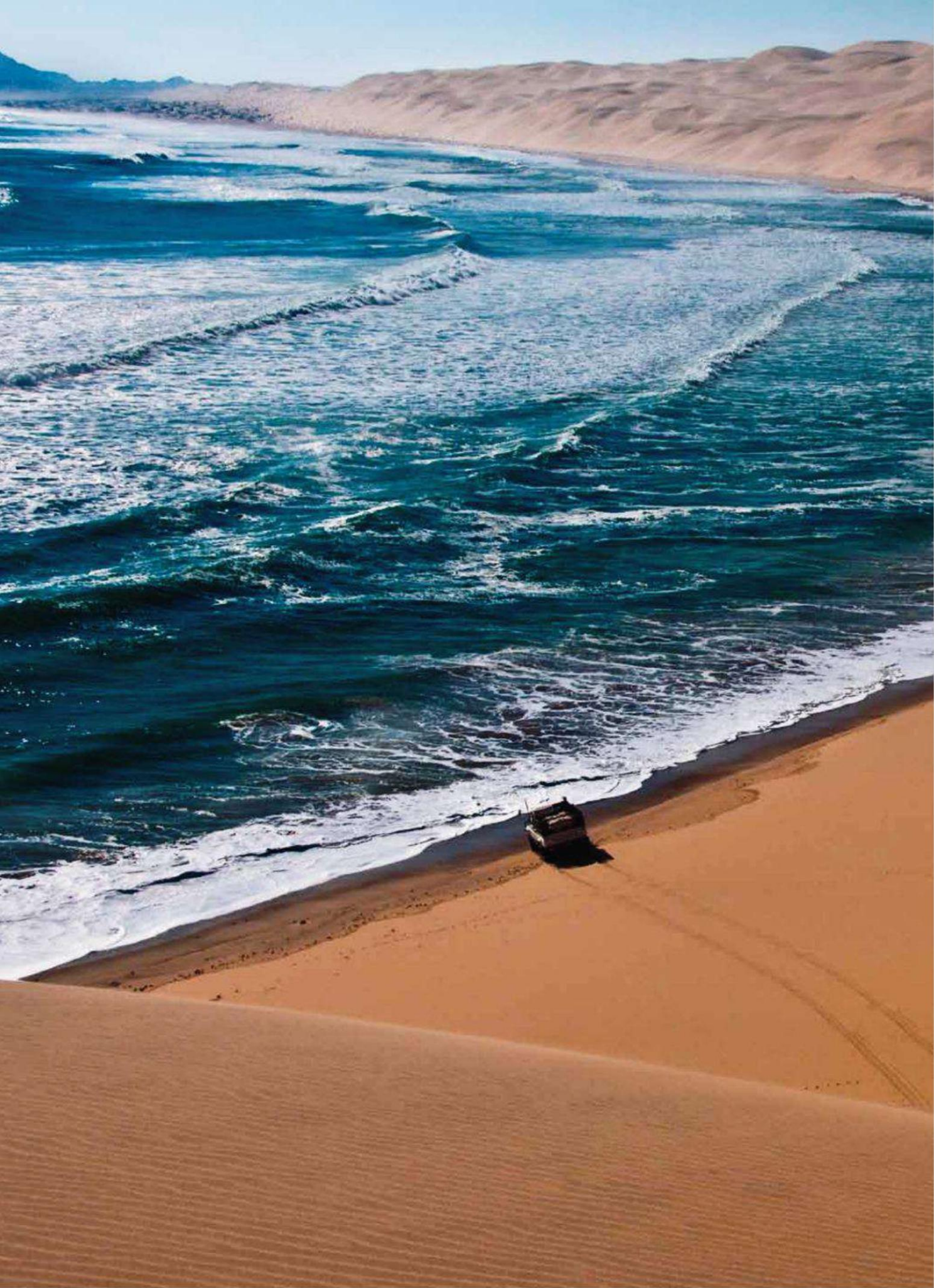
The native San people of Namibia traditionally hollowed out branches of the quiver tree, such as this one in Namib-Naukluft National Park, to hold their arrows. *Right:* Vegetation defines the ridges of sand dunes in Namib-Rand Nature Reserve.

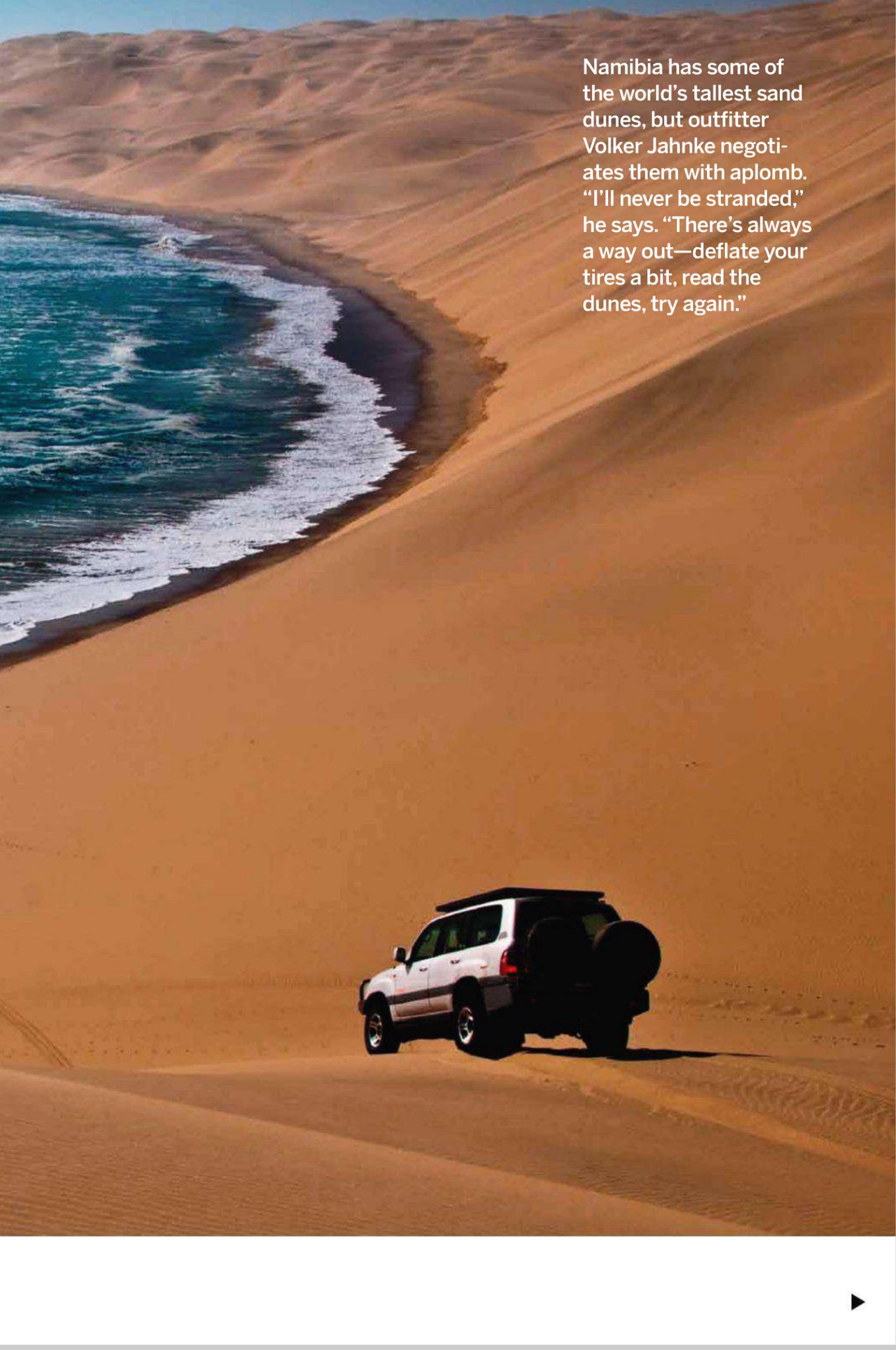


A journey to Namibia's prohibited zone—
closed for decades to all but diamond
miners—reveals pristine landscapes virtually
untouched since 1908.

YOUR OWN [PRIVATE] AFRICA

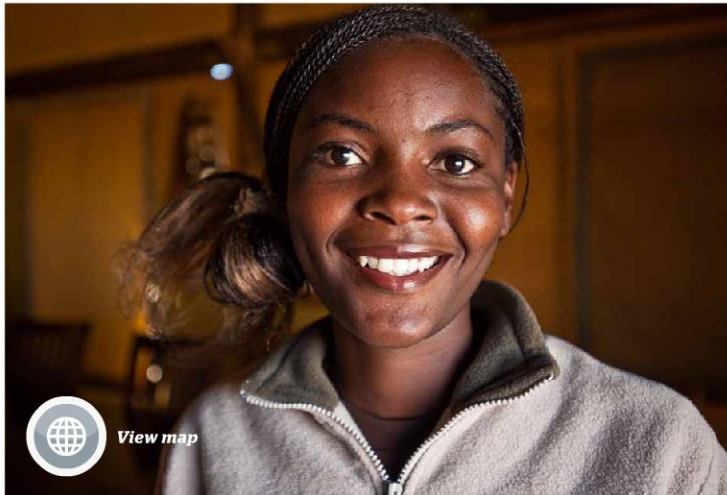
By **Christine Eckstrom**
Photographs by **Frans Lanting**



A white SUV is driving on a sand dune in Namibia. The dune is a vast, undulating expanse of golden sand. In the background, the ocean is visible, with waves crashing against the shore. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The SUV is a white four-door model with a roof rack and a spare tire mounted on the back. It is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the frame, moving towards the left. The dune's surface is marked with subtle ripples and tracks from previous vehicles. The ocean is a deep blue-green color, with white foam from the waves contrasting against the sand. The overall scene is one of a remote, coastal desert environment.

Namibia has some of the world's tallest sand dunes, but outfitter Volker Jahnke negotiates them with aplomb. "I'll never be stranded," he says. "There's always a way out—deflate your tires a bit, read the dunes, try again."





JUST POINT YOUR VEHICLE

straight down and go,” Volker Jahnke says to me, his voice gravely over the two-way radio. “But don’t stop and don’t turn the wheel,” he cautions, “or you’ll roll like a melon.” I’m perched atop a skyscraper-high sand dune in a 4x4 truck, aiming down. All I see is a sheer drop of sand and Jahnke’s Land Cruiser at the bottom, looking like a Tinker Toy.

Around me stretch miles of golden dunes, rolling in waves to every horizon, like a scene from *Lawrence of Arabia*. I’m in the heart of the great sand sea of Namibia in the southwest corner of Africa. It’s Day Two of a one-week, four-wheel-drive expedition into an area known as the Sperrgebiet—German for “prohibited zone”—a diamond-mining concession controlled by De Beers that was off limits for nearly a century. A few years ago the government made this area a national park, opening it for guided tours on a limited-access basis, one group at a time.

Volker Jahnke of Desert Magic Tours is one of a handful of outfitters permitted to lead visitors into the prohibited zone, a place few have been privileged to see. At this moment, our group of five—Jahnke, his two drivers, photographer Frans Lanting, and I—are the only people in an uncharted desert wilderness of 10,000 square miles. For seven days, this expanse, for all practical purposes, is our own private Africa.

Space sets Namibia apart. It’s a country of epic landscapes and cinematic beauty spread across an area nearly twice the size of California but with only two million people. A population density of a mere seven people per square mile may contribute to the relaxed spirit—and freedom to explore—that you find here.

Zebras approach a water hole in the reserve, while a staffer at Wolwedans, known for its attentive service, offers guests a warm smile.



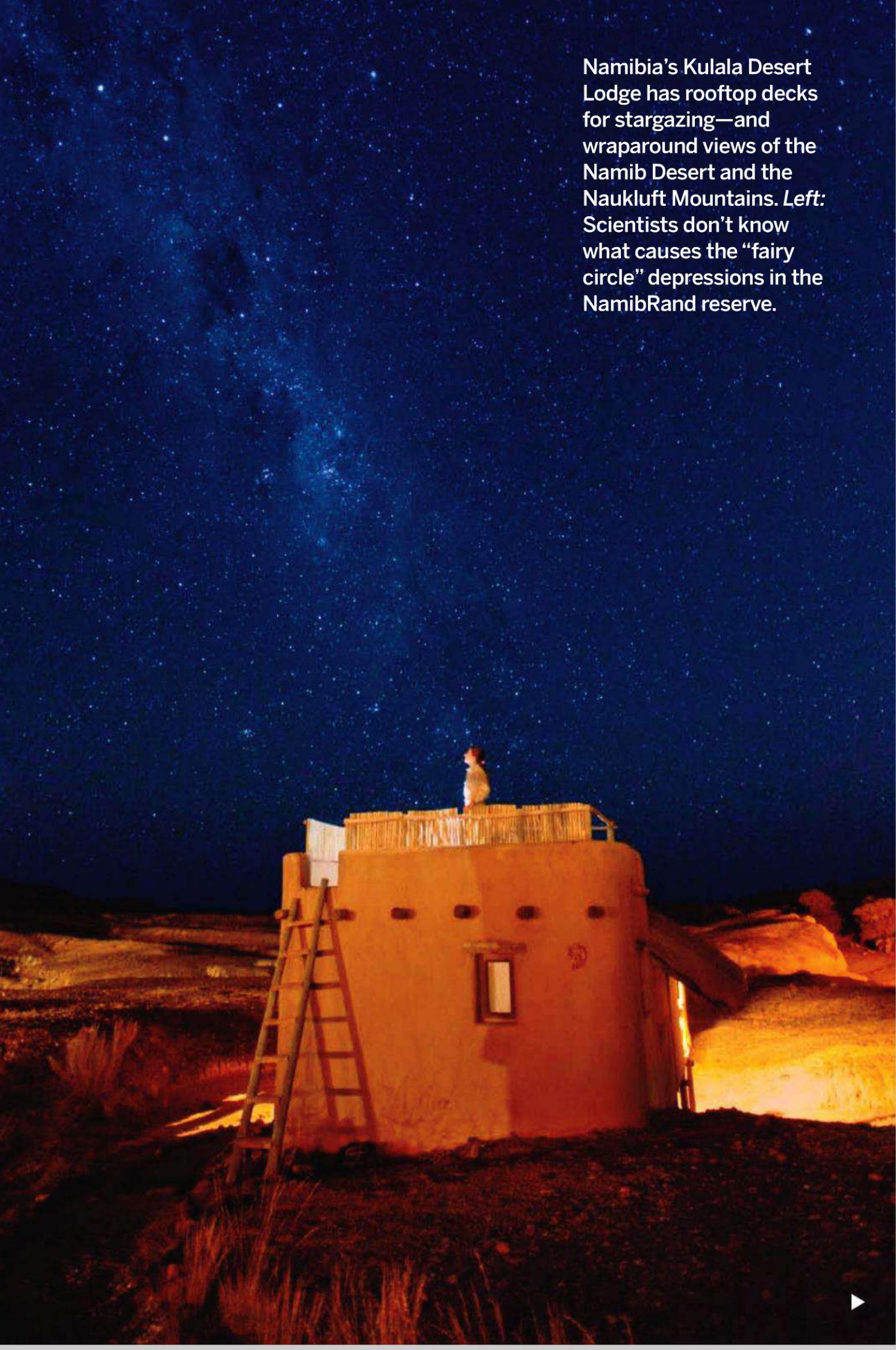


Windblown sands fill a derelict building in the ghost town of Kolmanskop, a diamond-mining boom town—now deserted—where Namibia's first diamonds were discovered in 1908.





Namibia's Kulala Desert Lodge has rooftop decks for stargazing—and wraparound views of the Namib Desert and the Naukluft Mountains. *Left:* Scientists don't know what causes the “fairy circle” depressions in the NamibRand reserve.

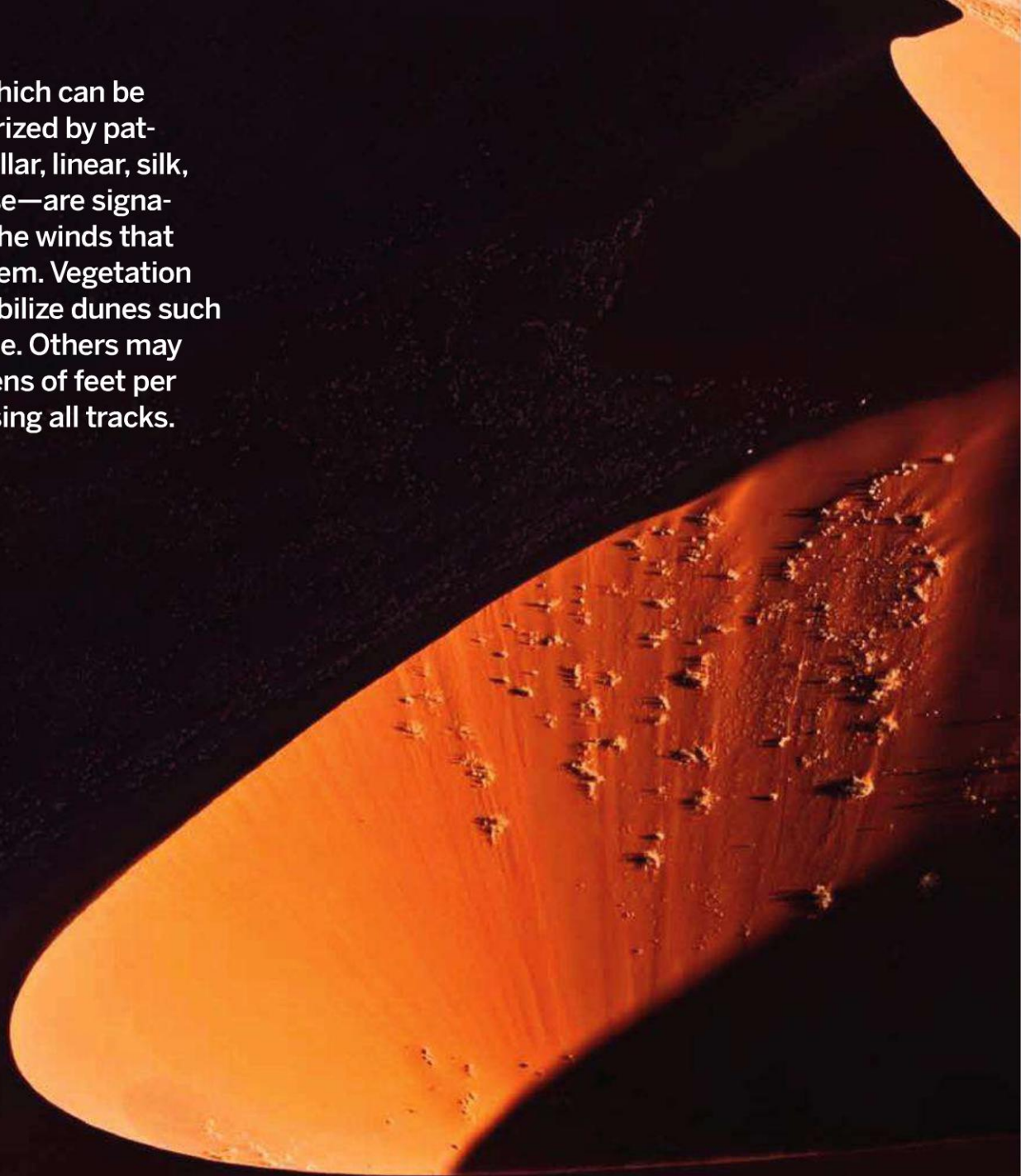




Guests at the rustic
Wolwedans Dunes Lodge
in the NamibRand reserve
huddle against the des-
ert's evening chill.



Dunes, which can be characterized by pattern—stellar, linear, silk, transverse—are signatures of the winds that create them. Vegetation helps stabilize dunes such as this one. Others may drift dozens of feet per year, erasing all tracks.









Giraffes were reintroduced to NamibRand in 2003, using animals already adapted to desert conditions. In 2006, the first giraffe calf was born on-site.



GHOSTS OF HONG KONG

You'll need your sixth sense to discover what makes
this frenetic metropolis one of the most hauntingly
memorable places in Asia. By **Daisann McLane**
Photographs by **Catherine Karnow**



Boys in uniforms radiate old-school charm. *Left: Skyscrapers recede into the mist as a public ferry, a throwback to a slower time, crosses Victoria Harbour.*



“The Chinese believe smoke is a way to

communicate between the world of the living and the world of the dead,” I explain to my friend Leslie. It’s just around lunchtime, and we’re walking to one of my favorite Hong Kong places, the Temple of One Hundred Names. We slip through the narrow gate, clamber up a flight of steep steps, and pass through the antechamber, where 30 or 40 spirals of burning incense spin lazily from the ceiling like coiled snakes.

¶ The air is thick with sandalwood smoke. Leslie stifles a cough as we hasten through the smoldering clouds to the inner altar room. ¶ Hundreds of years ago, so

the story goes, Chinese fishermen passing by in their boats noticed this same smoky aroma as it wafted out from the shore-side temples and began calling this island in the South China Sea “Heung Gong,” or Fragrant Harbor. Hong Kong is perhaps the only city in the world named for a smell. You breathe in, and it feels as if you’ve inhaled a spirit, something alive. ¶ We

A 1912 legislative building (right) reflects a British colonial legacy. Incense coils (left) rise heavenward at a Sheung Wan temple.



Text

Hot Magazines





Brunch at Tsui Wah restaurant includes a bagel and beef curry and noodle soup.



[View map](#)



Suddenly,

the bag containing
the just-beheaded, gutted, and
cleaned grouper jerks sharply
and shoots out of my hand

**as if it were trying
to fly away.**

Graham Street Market caters to the Hong
Konger craving for seasonal foods.





A couple pose for quirky wedding photos at the Starbucks on Duddell Street, where an art installation pays tribute to old Hong Kong.



多謝來六
謝坐賓人
合一三座
作遊位位

多謝來六
謝坐賓人
合一三座
作遊位位



Located in a three-story heritage building, the reservations-only Kitchen Yin Yang pairs a bygone atmosphere (*right*) with inventive dishes like a tofu and caviar appetizer (*below*). Fresh produce comes from the restaurant's own organic farms.

Daisann's
Hong Kong
Haunts







A woman and her dog walk down a stretch of Staunton Street lined with vintage photos.



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有幾多個十年？

“Since

the handover, foreigners want
to know if we have
become more Chinese.

Actually **we are becoming
less Chinese.”**

Colorful apartment buildings in
Kennedy Town prove that Hong Kong isn't
all glass-and-steel high-rises.





LAN of n

MOODY VA
ART
LATER



Tugged by memories of her late father, Joyce Maynard traces his debut as an artist with visits to sites he rendered on paper and canvas in a land she never knew—coastal British Columbia.

By **JOYCE MAYNARD**
Photographs by **AARON HUEY**

LANDSCAPES my father

VANCOUVER ISLAND CAPTIVATED
ARTIST MAX MAYNARD—AND, DECADES
LATER, HIS DAUGHTER.

T

he sign caught my eye on a road trip a friend and I took some years ago through British Columbia: Forbidden Plateau. ¶ The name was familiar. For as long as I could remember, I'd had a painting by that name hanging in my house. Painted by my father. ¶ More than 20 years had passed since my father's death, 70 since he had painted that particular landscape. ¶ "Let's turn back!" I said to my friend, who was driving. We did, but it was winter, the mountain steep, the trails I wanted to hike impenetrable. At that moment I vowed to return one day. And I did.



Moss-velveted trees rise in Cathedral Grove, an ecosystem on Vancouver Island that once teemed with centuries-old Douglas fir trees.



[View map](#)

As day ebbs and tides
recede, amethyst- and
coral-hued starfish
cling to a rock in wave-
washed Schooner
Cove, composing their
very own watercolor.

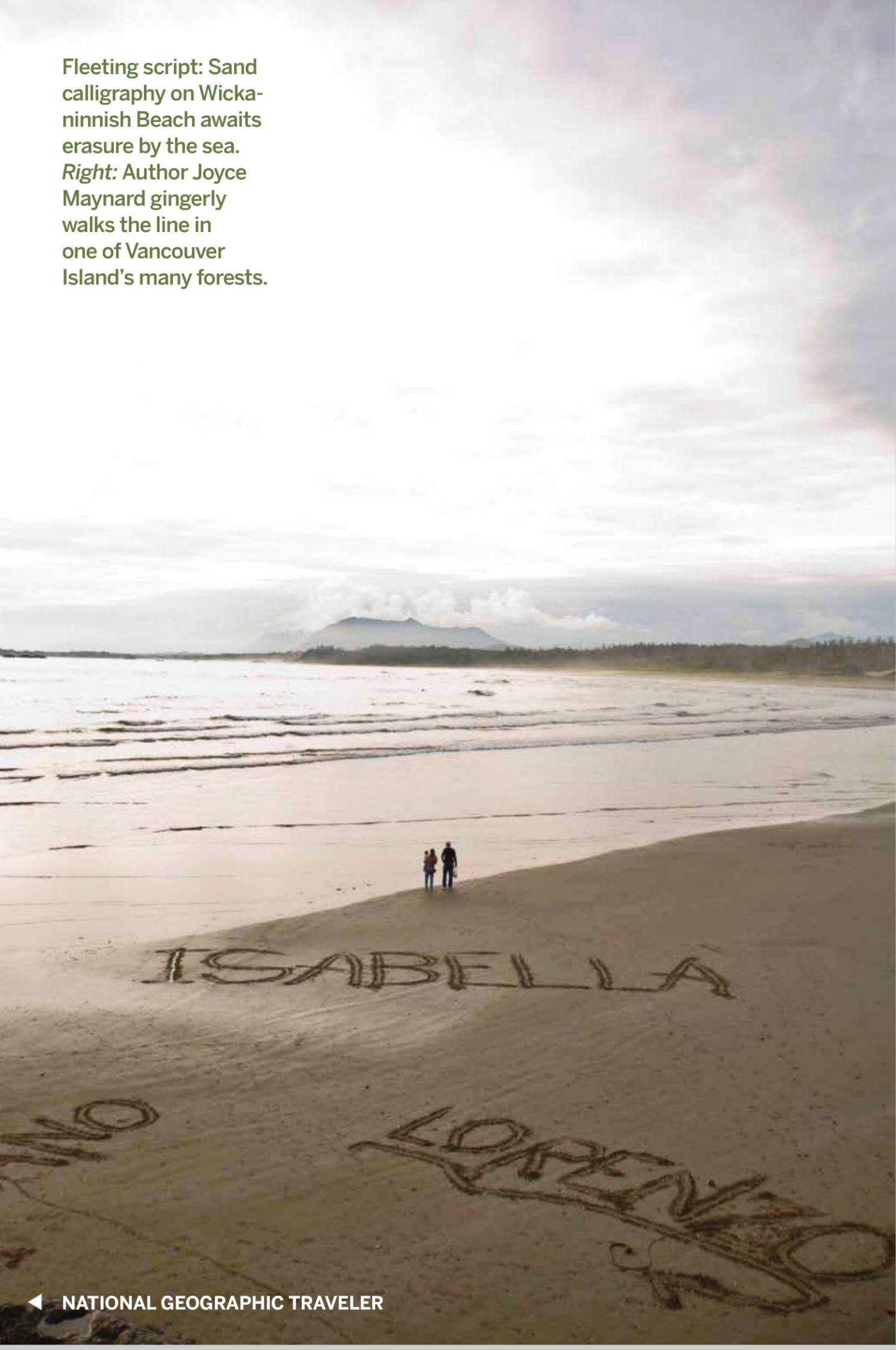
Forlorn and oh so picturesque, Vancouver Island's Old Stone Butter Church became a recurring presence in Max Maynard's paintings. Backroad beauty, here in rural Cowichan Valley (*right*), remained a particular passion for Max Maynard.



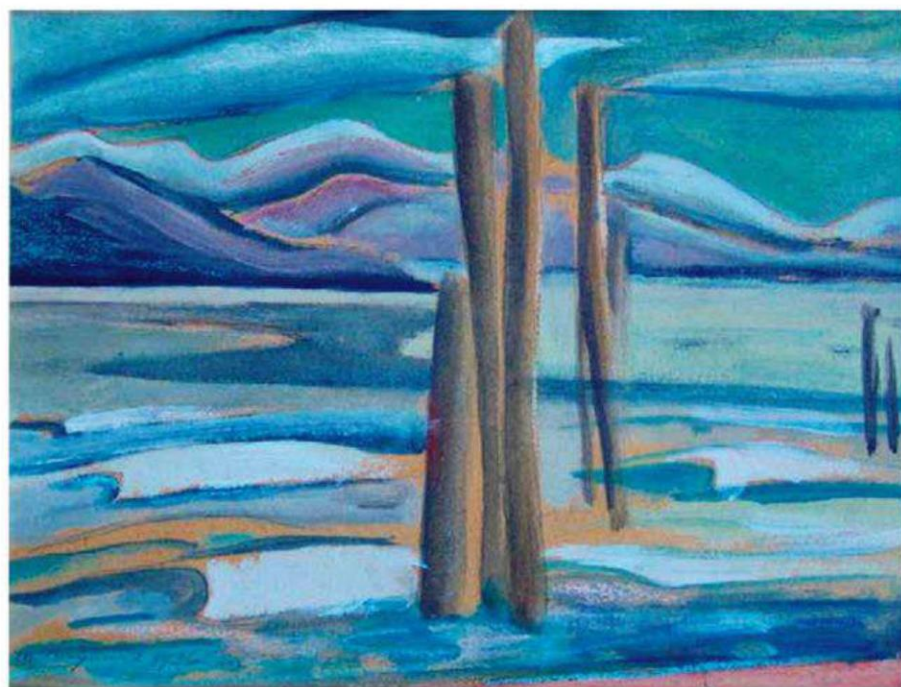


MY FATHER was my first and best teacher. The lessons he taught me had to do not just with how to represent an image on paper but with how to look at a landscape, how to see.

Fleeting script: Sand calligraphy on Wickaninnish Beach awaits erasure by the sea.
Right: Author Joyce Maynard gingerly walks the line in one of Vancouver Island's many forests.







I FOUND THE
landscape, defined
by trees, not only
visually captivating
but oddly moving. It is
one of my father's gifts
to me: the lesson that
beauty can be found
in unlikely places.



Driftwood comes in all sizes on the shores of Pacific Rim National Park, along Vancouver Island's southwest coast. The scene's muted tones are mirrored in Max Maynard's painting of nearby Sooke Harbour (left).



Girls share a barefoot moment at Sahtlam Lodge, on the Cowichan River.



TRAVELER20

TRAVEL-WORTHY EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

MARCH 23-27 **NEW ORLEANS, LA** **Stellaaaaaaa!** The Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival this year marks both its 25th anniversary and the 100th birthday of the playwright himself, who called the Crescent City his "spiritual home." The packed schedule of events includes music and theater productions, poetry slams, French Quarter literary walking tours, and the infamous Stanley and Stella Shouting Contest (*right*). www.tennesseewilliams.net



A highlight of Milan's Carnevale Ambrosiano is a family-friendly costume parade.

MARCH 3-5

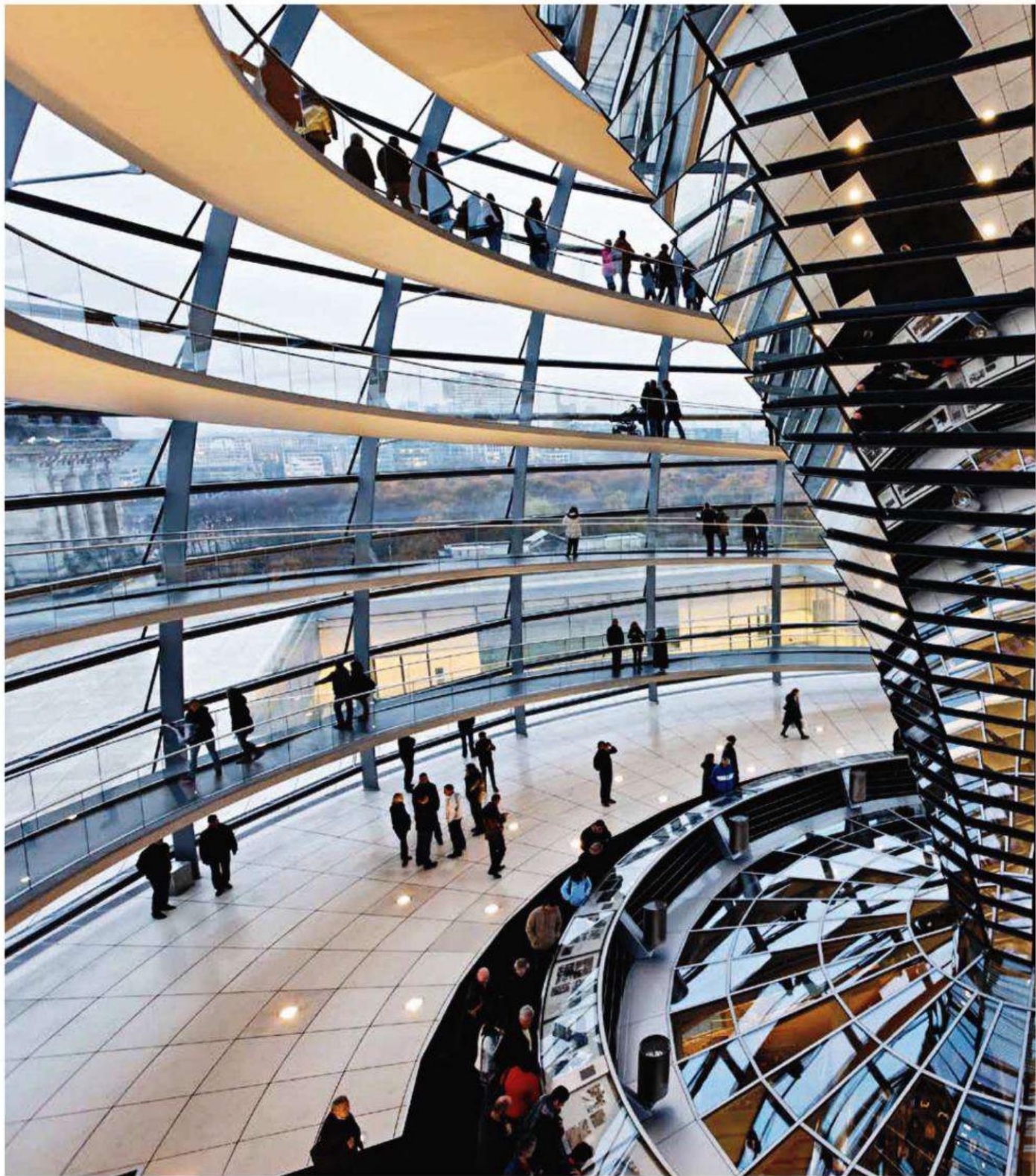
SANIBEL ISLAND, FLORIDA

Shell Shocked Positioned in the path of Gulf of Mexico currents, Sanibel Island's beaches trap an influx of seashells that has beachcombers coming back year after year. For three days in March, the island's annual Shell Fair & Show—now in its 74th year—stages a craft fair and perhaps the largest display of shell art anywhere. Pick up a souvenir of shells called a Sailor's Valentine, popular in the 1800s when sailors brought them home to their sweethearts. www.sanibelcommunity-house.net

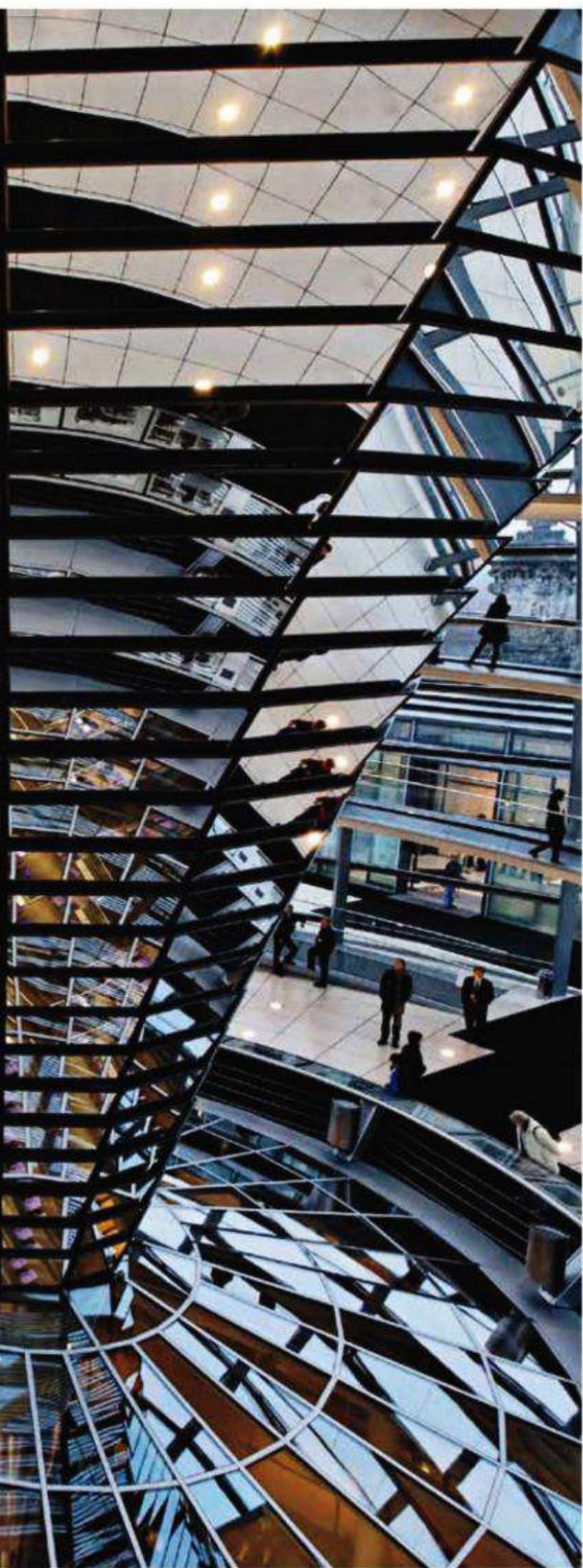
MARCH 3-5

MASTERTON, NEW ZEALAND

Wool Throwdown With a ratio of seven sheep per person, New Zealand unsurprisingly has honed sheep shearing into a sport. Since 1961, the North Island's annual Golden Shears championships have allowed shearers to show off their talent and compete for prizes. Skills tested include shearing, wool handling, and wool pressing (packing the wool into bags). Competitors work with fine wools



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Berlin, Germany

Photograph and Text
by Raymond Choo

DURING A TRIP to Berlin that coincided with the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, I visited the Reichstag (parliament building) and shot this photo inside the glass dome. Visitors walking on the floor and along the spiral ramp to the top of the dome—which measures 77 feet high—provide a sense of scale. (The dome is now closed to the general public due to security concerns.) The 360 mirrors in the center reflect natural light into the parliament chamber below. Originally built in 1894, the Reichstag was almost destroyed by fire in 1933 and by Allied bombing during World War II. After the reunification of East and West Germany in 1990, the capital was moved to Berlin, and the building was completely renovated. Sir Norman Foster designed this new dome to replace the original cupola. Its construction required 800 tons of steel and 32,291 square feet of glass. The result is one of Berlin's most recognized landmarks.



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